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THE WAR—ITS PRACTICAL LESSONS TO DEMOCRACY

ANOTHER I. S. & E. BOOKLET

THE WAR—ITS PRACTICAL LESSONS TO DEMOCRACY

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FOREWORD

WHILE this address deals with problems of public business, the underlying principles discussed are those which should be kept constantly in mind, both by the management and those who benefit by the efficient management of enterprise. In fact, a standard textbook on the subject of "Management" could be written around what, in this, are called the five essentials of success in the struggle of Democracy to survive, namely:—

A strong, intelligent leadership.

A well-disciplined line organization.

A well-trained staff organization.

A regularly constituted forum for independent inquiry and discussion of results and proposals, and for the determination of questions of policy.

A prompt and effective means of electoral control.

Every competitor of business is in a struggle to survive. We do not call it war, but failure to compete means that it would be wiped out as surely as would France by the success of Prussian Autocracy. Substitute the owner or stock-holder for elector and the public, and the foregoing may be accepted as the five essentials of the successful management of a great industry or any number of them.

Conversely, it is fitting to know what is needed in this hour of National emergency is an organization, a leadership, a discipline, and expert staff guidance which makes for the conservation of every available resource.

To this in both public and private business, we must add those factors which will make our institutions subservient to common welfare as interpreted by a majority — the principle of democracy.

GEORGE F. WILLETT.

WHY THIS SERIES OF BOOKLETS IS ISSUED

THE primary function of the Industrial Service & Equipment Company is to serve. It serves as an aid to corporate management. Successful management depends upon effective leadership which in turn must be premised on co-operation. Every man, no matter what his place, must be depended upon to do his part. Neither leadership nor co-operation in support of leadership is possible without community of understanding. This is quite as needful as a community of interest.

This series of pamphlets is one of the ways in which the Industrial Service & Equipment Company is responding to requests of its clientele for service on the educational side. It is supplementary to our periodical "Industrial Service" — the latter being a mirror by which the esprit de corps of the various associated companies is reflected.

The pamphlets are intended for contributions which are not suited to the periodical, but which it is thought may be helpful to getting and giving a broader and clearer vision of the duties and responsibilities of each member of the Willett-Sears Group, who is joining in the common effort to make good to opportunity.

THE WAR—ITS PRACTICAL LESSONS TO DEMOCRACY

ESSENTIAL DEFECTS IN THE POLITICAL MACHINERY OF THE NATIONS OPPOSED TO PRUSSIAN AUTOCRACY.*

IN this national emergency, when estimated public expenditures run into figures that no man can grasp, when in one year the demands on the Treasury promise to equal the total cost of government from the time of our Independence, including the total cost of five other wars, we are beginning to think on the subject of President Taft's special message to Congress — "The Need for a National Budget." The need for planning is so obvious that we now are debating what kind of a budget we shall have. And in this debate it is taken for granted that I am at all times and under all conditions in favor

*Paper read by Frederick A. Cleveland at the annual conference of the National Municipal League at Detroit, November 22, in discussion of the general topic, "Should the Executive Frame the Budget."

of the proposition that "The Executive Should Frame the Budget." Nothing could be farther from the truth. What seems to be missed is this: — that before we can intelligently decide a question of procedure, we must decide a great constitutional question, viz: "What kind of a government shall we have?"

A budget at best is only an instrument of control. With much reason it has been likened to the governor on an engine. Just imagine ourselves met here (not as a group of men who have given years of our lives to the consideration of the practical workings of the machinery of governments) but as a society of mechanical engineers. Then imagine that one of this number were asked to speak of this text: "Every prime mover should be equipped with a centrifugal ball and plunger governor." In perfect candor, with all scientific reasoning and human experience back of the conclusion, in one breath the question might be answered "no;" and with equal candor, in another breath it could be answered "yes." The only way it could be answered at all without the logic of the speaker being open to challenge, would be to say at the

beginning what the engineer would say: "It all depends. It depends on what is the kind of a prime mover on which the instrument of control is to be used." If it is to be used on a stationary steam engine, "well and good." If it is proposed to use it on an internal combustion gas engine, a water wheel, or a treadmill, "no." If, however, we first take up the question as to what kind of an engine we shall have, then we may with some intelligence discuss the different forms of devices adapted to the control of the prime mover that is selected.

Two Types of Political Engines.

The engines of democracy are now being tested in a very practical way. In this war the most powerful political machinery of the world has been brought into competition. Generally speaking, the engines to be tested are of two types: (1) the type developed by patronizing Prussian autocracy; (2) the type developed by the master builders of democracy. The efficiency of the first type has been demonstrated. When the war broke out this was all tuned up ready for action.

The engines of democracy were not even assembled for use. The world is waiting in almost breathless suspense to know whether, when they are assembled and tuned up, a like efficiency can be developed. For the engines that have been made to serve democratic people must demonstrate their superiority or accept defeat.

But the very arrogance of those who direct and control the great Prussian political machines as they have run Juggernaut-like over intervening small nations, crushing their way into the very workshop of their challengers in the face of allied opposition, may prove a blessing in disguise. It has brought independent free people to realize that something essential has been left out of their engines of war; that something has also been left out of their engines of peace — as a result of which they have so far been at a disadvantage.

Distressing as all this has been, the shock, the feeling of insecurity, the necessity for making democracy safe in the world, has put the master builders to work anew. They now see that they must build an engine which is efficient as well as safe. They realize for

the first time that in their constitution building they must have in mind not only the desire for freedom, but there must also be strength for service — that they must conserve all of the forces and resources that are within their command. They have found this out by being confronted by the most efficient war and peace organization that the world has ever known — an organization that now threatens to crush out freedom and impose a paternalism that knows no limitations.

What the Master Builders of Democracy Have to Guide Them.

Fortunately, in preparing to meet this competition, the master builders of democracy need not work in the dark. They know what is the principle that gives strength to the Prussian political machine. They know also what are the elements of weakness in the engines of democracy. They know that the Prussian machine was built around strong executive leadership, unencumbered by any form of restraint, except such as autocracy has chosen to put on itself. They know that in its initial planning democracy purposely

deprived itself of the benefits of strong executive leadership in the fear that it would become autocratic.

Democracies are now face to face with the necessity of so organizing that they may have the benefits of an executive leadership which can deliver every ounce of energy, use every human and material resource at their command, and at the same time make this executive leadership at all times subservient to the will of the people. Unity of effort, centralized direction, discipline which makes for highest efficiency and under democratic control,—these are the objectives to be reached in the adjusting and tuning up processes that are now going on.

The Principle of Centralized Direction.

This is only another way of stating the principle announced by the heads of the three greatest democracies engaged in this struggle. Within the last week, the Prime Minister of France, M. Painleve, at the Paris Conference is reported to have said:

"The enemies' alliance reached *unity of effort* by brutal discipline, one of the peoples

among them having mastered the others and rendered them serviceable.

"We do not admit of subjection to other people. * * * To reconcile independence with the need for unity of direction," that is the accomplishment which M. Painleve points to as necessary to the success of democracy. And this principle of centralized executive is to be applied not alone to the organized forces of a single nation, but in this emergency to all of the forces of the allied powers.

Unfortunately, the French people were not quite ready to accept the conclusion. M. Painleve had taken too long a step in advance. The next day he received a vote of lack of confidence from the French Parliament and leadership was turned over to M. Clemenceau. But Lloyd George returning home, being questioned by Asquith, the leader of the opposition, boldly asserted the same doctrine. And the faith which was inspired by a century of effective control over the strongest national leadership that the British Empire has yet developed and without intrusion on the ideals of human liberty or suggestion of usurpation, gave a majority vote in the representative

body to the British Prime Minister in favor of the application of this same principle to secure the benefits of international co-operation.

Perhaps by coincidence, perhaps by prearrangement, the day before Lloyd George's speech, the democracies of the world breakfasted with these headlines before them:

"President Wilson cables to get together."

The Washington news dispatch read like this:

"President Wilson's message to Colonel House declared for unity of plan and control over the conduct of the war for all the Allies. He laid down the principle that unity must be accomplished if the great resources of the United States are to be used to the best advantage."

Here is an agreement as to what that something is which has been left out of the machine through which well directed and well disciplined forces of democracy are to meet and overcome the organized and disciplined forces of autocracy. And I venture there is scarcely an American who will not give affirmation to the views expressed by our President. Why?

Because it is consonant with common experience and common sense; because there is not a part of the political mechanism required to enable democracy to become both more highly efficient than Prussian autocracy and at the same time conform to the most exacting demands and highest ideals of popular sovereignty — there is not a part which has not been fully developed and tried out. The only thing that stands in the way is mass inertia,— the difficulty of making an institutional change in a democracy even when the people are dissatisfied.

Five Essentials to Successful Management of a Democracy.

As has been said, we know the requirements. They are simple. Every one of them are necessary to success in this great contest — viz:

(1) *Strong Executive Leadership* — the stronger the better, the strongest that democracy can produce, with no limitations or inhibitions so long as this leadership has the support of those who are served.

(2) *A Well-Disciplined Line Organization*— an organized personnel as large as may be

needed to execute orders, to do the things that the people need to have done without waste of human or material resources.

(3) *A highly specialized staff organization* — an organized personnel, trained and set aside to study and report facts and conditions that must be taken into account by the leadership; the means of obtaining the best possible basis for the exercise of discretion, of developing a management which is made intelligent through *staff knowledge* as well as made strong through *line discipline*.

(4) *Adequate facilities for inquiry, criticism, discussion and publicity by a responsible personnel which is independent of the executive* — the making of the representative body a real forum with full opportunity given to a responsible critical opposition under the leadership of persons who are well trained in the public service, a leadership as strong as that at the head of the administration.

(5) *The means of effective control in the hands of the people and their representatives* — a control through which at any time, simply by adverse vote, the sceptre of power can be taken

away from the executive and put into the hands of another, without loss of *line discipline*, *staff knowledge*, or *managerial experience*, without loss of an ounce of efficiency, enabling democracy to change engineers at any time without stopping or slowing down the engine.

The first three of these are the essentials of an efficient government. The last two are the essentials of democratic control.

The Prussians Use Only the First Three.

The builders of the Prussian political engine used the first three principles only — they had no interest in democracy except to crush it. They left out of their mechanism the principles which made for democratic control — gaining the loyal support and contentment of the people through a paternalistic service in the same way as did the head of the family under the old Mosaic law, and by developing a culture which left no alternative open to the individual other than to accept this benevolent paternalism enforced by a penal practice that because of its added horrors has become known as the doctrine of *Schrecklichkeit*.

Britain Left Out the Second and Third.

Great Britain in building up her imperial organization has stressed the first, the fourth, and the fifth of these principles. Britain has provided for leadership, but she has from the first insisted that this leadership shall be responsible and therefore the attention of British statesmen has been devoted primarily to expedients which will insure democratic control. Because of her national strength, because of her predominance, because of her isolated position and her control over the sea, however, it was not until the beginning of this war that Britons were made to see the necessity for utilizing the second and third principles —the necessity of providing for a well disciplined line and a well trained scientific staff.

France Used All.

France had developed an engine in which all five of these essential principles of political mechanics were used to good effect, but she had not the human or material resources to build it large enough and strong enough to successfully compete with the Prussians, and

it was only through brave Belgium's sacrifice that France was saved from destruction.

Russia provided for leadership but did not make it strong, and neglected all of the other four essentials. It was nothing but her mass weight and size that held the Prussian war engine on her border.

America Has Left Out All of Them.

America has developed a type of engine of her own — one built in disregard of all of these great principles. The most conspicuous thing in all American constitutions is fear of strong executive leadership. We have not developed a well disciplined line organization. We have not developed a strong, intelligent staff — in fact this is a thing impossible to do without strong executive leadership. We have not developed adequate facilities for independent responsible inquiry, criticism, discussion and publicity. We have not developed means of effective control in the hands of the people and their representatives.

With these known requirements and defects, we now have before us the largest, the most vital political question that we have ever

had to *decide*. It is this: Whether we and our allies will be able to so far adapt and tune up our political machinery that we may demonstrate in actual competition with the engines of war in the hands of a Prussian autocracy an efficiency that is adequate for self-protection and at the same time one which may be consistent with the aims and purposes of democracy. Russia has already gone to pieces under the strain. Italy is shaking in every part. The burden has fallen on Great Britain, France and America. It is for them to develop and effectively use a political machine in which these five principles are so well balanced, and in which each part of the mechanism is so well adjusted that all the impulses, all the intelligence, and all the resources of democracy may be brought into play with the elements of waste and loss reduced to the minimum, thereby demonstrating to the world that democracy is able better to conserve the things on which humanity must depend for its welfare than can the designers of the most effective, the best organized, the most intelligent autocracy that has ever reached out for world power.

The Allies Must Become Both More Efficient and More Democratic.

It is believed that democracy will successfully meet this test. But it will meet it, not by decrying Prussian efficiency, but by becoming more efficient than Germany, and more democratic than America. It is believed that it will meet the most exalting demands made upon it because the most effective principles of management and control that are known are consistent with the spirit of freedom. When these principles are successfully applied, democracy will develop the fullest measure of strength because under a regime in which strong leadership is reconciled with freedom an esprit de corps is made possible which cannot be found among people who accept the dictates of an irresponsible Caesar, and who, like dumb driven cattle, put their necks under the yoke.

But the salvation of democracy depends on its ability under stress to apply and use the first three of these principles in such manner that all the combined forces of the Allies may work together with the singleness of purpose pointed out as essential at the Paris Conference.

The Budget as a Means of Enforcing Democracy on Efficient Leadership.

With these broad principles in mind let us return to the subject immediately before us — the budget as an instrument of democratic control.

I wish the members of this Conference to get clearly before them this point, that an executive budget is essentially an instrument of control in the hands of a representative body over a strong executive leadership and its use is to make that leadership responsible to the people through their representatives. When, therefore, I have said that I believe in an executive budget, it has not been because I believe that an executive budget is practical or even possible under conditions as they exist in America today. I believe in the executive budget because I believe in the principles of responsible executive leadership. Given this as an essential to an *efficient* organization, the requirement that the executive shall frame the budget, that the executive shall prepare, submit, explain and defend both his acts and proposals before the representative body, that he shall do this in such a manner as to retain the

support of a majority of that body before further supplies are granted, this follows as a means of rendering the Government responsive to the will of the people.

I wish the members of this Conference also to get this other point: — that such a procedure, such a method of control, is adapted to one general type of democratic machine only: that the executive budget is adapted for use as a controlling device only when the executive is made the prime mover, and when having been put in the position of leader, he is to be made responsible; that it is adapted for use only when the executive can be put on trial to defend his leadership at any moment, and can retain it only so long as he is trusted, and supported by a majority; that it is adapted only to a progressive government because so long as the executive is trusted and supported by a majority can he have the power to direct and use all the human and material resources of the politically organized commonwealth or federation for common welfare ends, but just the moment he is not trusted (whether because he was going too fast, or because he was going in a direction that the people or

a majority of their representatives do not approve, or because he had failed to use the powers at his command in a manner responsive to their wishes) for any reason and at any time, the sceptre of power can be snatched from his hand; that it is adapted to a democratic government because by its use, with a strong responsible executive, the will of the people is the power behind this leadership — the force that makes autocratic leadership impossible because at any time the autocrat can be deprived of his position simply by a vote of lack of confidence, because he may be deposed and some one whose leadership will be supported may be put in his place.

Extensive Budget Possible Only When Responsible Publicity and Prompt Electoral Control are Provided.

Having provided for strong leadership, then a well disciplined line and well organized staff follows. But an executive budget procedure, in order to operate effectively as an instrument of democratic control, must be premised on the two other principles mentioned, namely: (1) adequate facilities for independent inquiry,

criticism, discussion and publicity by a responsible personnel independent of the executive and (2) a means of effective control in the hands of the people or their representatives.

The first of these principles means that the representative body shall not be responsible for leadership in matters of administration; that each member shall be free and independent of the executive; and that this body shall be so organized and conducted that it will be a real forum in which full opportunity will be given to each member to put himself in the attitude of criticism to ally himself with a critical opposition under the leadership of persons who are as well trained in the public service and as competent and as strong as the leadership which is at the head of the administration.

The second principle referred to requires that the people shall have in their hands and in the hands of their representatives a recognized procedure which may at any time be called into operation for the purpose of finding out whether those who are looked to for executive leadership will be supported in any act or proposal brought under critical review by

those who oppose, and of determining whether the organized, well disciplined line forces of democracy, operating under the staff guidance provided to assist the management, is being used in a manner which meets with popular approval.

It is in these respects that our own Government has been most sadly deficient,— not because there have not been opportunities for criticism, (we have all the guarantees of the rights of assembly, free speech, and free press) but because criticism has been irresponsible and usually has had for its aims misleading the people in order that the ballot may be used for selfish ends. Our democracy has not provided for itself the guarantees necessary to the ascertainment of the truth in matters of public controversy; it has not set up a procedure for insuring political justice by establishing means that will insure independent responsible inquiry, criticism, discussion and publicity.

Our Publicity of "Stinkhorn" Variety.

Our publicity has been of the " stinkhorn " variety. I doubt not that most of you, while

tramping in the woods, have met with the "stinkhorn", an edible mushroom wonderfully pleasing in form, and attractive in color, which emits an odor suggesting animal filth or carrion. This odor attracts to the fungus blow-flies, scavenger-beetles, and other insects which revel in filth, and after wallowing in the malodorous slime they crawl away carrying to their resting places "spores," which dropping about on friendly soil develop other "stinkhorns." Here is a thing in Nature which has capitalized the instincts of scavenger insects, thereby getting them to do its work. It does this by the use of misinformation of a kind that among humans oftentimes leads to very distressing results.

The human desire for scandal is so intense that it overcomes the desire for truth. The blow-fly and the scavenger-beetle have proved the more scientific in that the first thing they do when they "smell" something is to go to the source, and finding that they have been misled they go their way. But not so with the human. In a summer colony, for example, Mrs. Jones goes to call on Mrs. Brown. Going by a wooded path that passes a spot near the

house where a " stinkhorn " is growing she smells something. She knows the smell. You can't fool her any more than you can the blow-fly, but she does not explore underneath the low hanging hemlock bough. She goes back and tells Mrs. Smith. Then Mrs. Smith calls, and as she passes the " stinkhorn " she detects the same smell. Having thus verified Mrs. Jones' suspicion, she confides in Mrs. White. In the meantime Mrs. Brown had also smelled something and her suspicion ends in her first firing the nursemaid and later the cook. Now Mr. Brown, coming out at the week-end, also smells something. He, like the others, does not investigate but loses confidence in his wife — thinking, if he is not so mean as to insinuate, that Mrs. Brown is so careless about sanitary conditions as to endanger the health of their children.

Public Opinion Based on Misinformation.

The illustration need not be carried farther. The point that I am making is that this is fairly typical of the methods used in this country for making public opinion; that in our political system no adequate provision

has been made for responsible, open-handed inquiry and publicity; that we have no procedure for protecting our leaders and our people against stinkhorn-politics. In our scheme of private justice, we have adopted a procedure which will require a person who accuses to face the accused — giving to each the opportunity to come into a public forum, present the facts, and have a decision rendered on the evidence. This is the thought which lies back of our jury system. But in our political system we have offered an inducement to the selfish and designing to destroy the very foundations of democratic government by cultivating in hidden places " stinkhorns " that finally in an insidious fashion, which has become a high art, are used to put into the discard those who honestly serve the public.

Our Instruments of Democratic Control Have Been Put Out of Commission.

Parliamentary bodies have been organized with a view to meting out political justice. We have the machinery for putting our leadership on trial, and for giving those who are accused by a critical opposition fair trial by

representatives of the people—by those who stand for the ideals of democracy. But we have not so used our representative bodies. On the contrary, we have done everything possible to crush the "opposition" to deprive the people of a fair trial of their leaders, to apply "gag" rules, with the result that we have irresponsible criticism and publicity, and irresponsible leadership.

May I repeat therefore that the question as to whether the executive shall frame the budget must be considered from the viewpoint of the government which we have. We have never had responsible leadership. We have never had responsible criticism and publicity. We have never had a means for making the government responsive to the will of the people. We have never had responsible government. In a government where these things do obtain, a discussion of the topic before this conference would be thought foolish. Such a topic would not even be considered of academic interest in France, England, Switzerland, Italy, or even Japan. With them there could be only one answer: "Of course the executive should frame the budget; who else

could do it with any intelligence; or if somebody else could, of what particular use would it be as a means of making the executive accountable?" Here in this country, because we have not provided the means for holding the executive accountable for his proposals as well as his acts, we have for a century left this procedure out of account and now we are beginning to ask ourselves a question about what kind of a method of control we shall use without first deciding what kind of a political machine it is to which we are to attach a proposed instrument of control.

We Built for Irresponsible Government.

As said before, we have built our political machinery in the thought that it is dangerous to have a prime mover; that we did not need to provide for responsible executive leadership; that all we needed to do was to choose "good" men without any experience (the less experienced the better) for fixed terms, then to trust to God till another election — with the result that we cumulate our grouches, accept as true the statements of irresponsible self-seeking persons who deal in half truths or lies without

any means given to officers to meet charges made against them in a way to protect them and the public against being misrepresented or misled. Then we complain of distrust. We complain of distrust when our whole governmental fabric is consciously framed on a theory of distrust. In the upbuilding of our machinery of government we have distrusted centralized authority, and our constitution makers have distrusted the people. Fixed terms have been adopted for executives because of distrust of a popular electorate; executives have been deprived of power of leadership because of fear of usurpation; representative bodies have had their powers curtailed because they were distrusted; and because when shorn of powers of leadership and deprived of all means of protection against misrepresentation, with no power either in their own hands or their representatives to develop and retain a constructive leadership that is trusted, and only so long as it has the support of a majority, the normal action at the end of each fixed executive term has been to sweep aside and relegate to the political graveyard every man who has come to know

how to serve the public will, whether as head of the administration or as leader of a responsible critical opposition — both of which functions are necessary to the upbuilding of an efficient public service that is responsive to the will of the people.

Under such a system as this the only person who can continue in office on the political side is a sail-trimmer or a member of the representative body who makes good with his constituency by "getting something" for his district — letting the executive take the kicks of the general electorate for waste and inefficiency of the public service; making pious bows when the executive is being offered up as sacrifice to appease the wrath of the great God "Demos."

Executive Budget Does Not Fit Irresponsible Government.

Assuming, however, that we Americans wish to continue the kind of political machine such as we now have — a machine which in its fundamental structure does violence to every principle of organization for efficient co-operation, which has been plastered over with

every kind of a reform patch and temporizing device that ingenuity of impractical dreamers and self-seeking individuals who live on this sort of thing can invent — assuming that we do not wish to avail ourselves of the experience of democratic peoples who have demonstrated that strong constructive, executive leadership can be safely developed for welfare ends, because it can be made responsive to the will of a majority — then if these premises be accepted I most heartily join with those who contend that the budget should not be made by the executive.

I would even go farther than they do and say that under such circumstances a budget cannot be made by the executive. And I say this also because of our experience. Since Ex-President Taft recommended the introduction of an executive budget in 1911, there has been an outcry for this as a remedy for legislative improvidence and misdirected effort. In 1912 he actually submitted a budget which still lies in the dusty pigeon-hole of a Congressional committee. Statute laws have been passed making it the duty of the Executive to prepare and submit a "budget," but all

these efforts have had about as much effect as if the governor of a steam engine had been screwed on to the fans of a wind mill; they have been almost entirely useless; until we recognize the constitutional weakness of our system as it has developed, such devices as these can prove nothing but expensive encumbrances.

In This Contest We Must Demonstrate Our Right to Survive.

At this time of great political stress, when the democracies of the world are in a struggle which puts them to the test, which calls them to face this great driving efficient of the Prussian autocratic war machine, we must demonstrate our right to survive. We, in our political impotence, with resources far beyond those of any other nation, who find ourselves wholly without organized means for effectively massing and using our resources in a common cause! We who when decision was made to enter this contest, instead of moving forward in order and with precision, had nothing but chaos at our seats of government! We, who now face the prospect of wasting

millions of lives as well as billions of resources, holding our place while perfecting our political mechanism! In the sight of these things do we not need to look about us and if we cannot learn from our own past discomfiture and discontent at the wasteful management of our own internal affairs, must we not now in this crisis consider whether we can learn something from the experience that our Allies gained at awful cost on the battlefront? And must we not ultimately realize that it is not war-time adjustments which count most? Must not America accept the conclusion that there is the same need before us in time of peace that there is in time of war? If we have our government organized on wrong lines, is it not time for us to look truth squarely in the face? While bowing our heads in humility, should not we as Americans and democrats ask ourselves whether any enterprise requiring broad co-operation can be efficiently managed without provision made for strong, intelligent "leadership" through which a *discipline* can be established and maintained that makes for "unity of effort?"

Official Concessions of Weakness.

Do we not concede the essential weakness of our whole political structure when Congress, from sheer necessity, makes President Wilson a dictator, throwing all constitutional guarantees to the winds — do we not concede in this that there must be "unity of direction" if democracy is to maintain itself? And yet when we make this concession in time of great national emergency, see what a plight we are in. We are about as fit for meeting our responsibilities, for effectively using the human and material resources at the command of the President, as would be the Harvard football team if every one were permitted to play "on his own hook" until the day when it became necessary to meet the Sons of Eli the committee suddenly turned to the captain and said: "Now you have full power to command. The whole university is back of you; go in and win." Nor can calling in a thousand successful players at some other game to stand by and "advise" the captain at such a time contribute anything but confusion.

M. Painleve has stated the problem clearly; the great need of the Allies today, (after three

years of the most rugged training in arms, after numberless lives have been sacrificed and a world of treasure has been destroyed) the great need of the Allies is to find a way to overcome lack of the unity of direction and discipline which makes for success. They are learning in the struggle of the battle-line that while some of them had provided for a responsive leadership, they did not see the need for the development of the staff knowledge and line discipline which would make these nations most serviceable.

France has proven to the world that strong, intelligent, efficient leadership can be made subservient to the ideals of democracy. England has proven that democracy may safely give to leadership powers unrestricted except by one principle, that it must retain the "confidence" of a majority of the representatives of the people or "resign" — the means of enforcement being the withdrawal of supplies.

Constitutional Changes Unnecessary — We Need Only to Change Our Minds.

And we can do this in our national government in a very simple manner. If the need

were clearly seen and the people demanded, it could be brought about without changing the constitution — without even the enactment of a statute. This could be done by Congress simply by changing its own " rules." If Congress were to require the cabinet to appear before them in an open public way, to come before them as a " committee of the whole," there to give an account of past acts and to explain proposals for the future, making the vote of supplies contingent on the support of the majority, we could at once have strong leadership and democratic control. What would happen in that case if the cabinet failed to get the support of a majority of the representative body ? Would not the President in that event be forced to reorganize his cabinet ? We can have strong and responsible government. But this will never come until there is a popular demand which will over-ride the powers which have been gradually appropriated by some forty different congressional committees that in effect run so many cross sections of the administration and which under a rule of seniority makes Congress a veritable autocracy.

I am not here to discuss whether the Executive should or should not frame the budget. I come before you to raise the question as to whether our history and experience with irresponsible government is not only not democratic in that it is not responsive, but whether or not if we are to continue to disregard the primary essentials of successful co-operative enterprise, with the continued waste of both human and material resources incident to the increasing demands on our government as the only agency on which the people can depend for protection and the promotion of common welfare; whether a continuation of the incapacity shown by American democracy must not mark us for failure; whether with the growing discontent and the cost of our inefficiency the verdict of a misled, helpless, exploited people, unable to provide for themselves the means of developing strong effective leadership—a leadership competent to serve and to protect both itself and the people against the cunning of an irresponsible opposition—may not make the choice in favor of a benevolent despotism.

To those who advocate the continuation of

our system of legislative, irresponsible autocracy, I leave the defense of institutions and methods that with the increasing realization of their impotence the people on almost every election for the last fifty years have condemned.

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